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FULBRIGHT

MEMORANDUM

March 29, 1961

CUBA POLICY

The question of United States policy toward Cuba involves a choice of two practical possibilities:

1. Overthrow of the Castro regime.
2. Toleration of the Castro regime, combined with efforts to isolate it and to insulate the rest of Latin America from it.

To these might be added a third possibility--reformation of the Castro regime. But Castro has had so many opportunities to reform and has rebuffed all of them that this course seems more theoretical than real. Perhaps, however, it should not be rejected out of hand until the President has consciously satisfied himself, through whatever private channels are available, that it is a futile course to pursue.

The Overthrow Policy

It is possible for a regime to be overthrown either from within or without. Despite signs of dissatisfaction within Cuba, the preponderance of the evidence points to the conclusion that the Castro regime is actually strengthening its control of the island, through familiar police-state methods. One cannot, therefore, count on a collapse of the Castro regime or its forcible overthrow through unaided internal forces.

Almost daily, however, the press carries stories, and in some cases pictures, of Cuban exiles undergoing military training at secret bases in Florida, or "somewhere in the Caribbean," or in Guatemala, for an invasion of Cuba. It is an open secret that the United States Government has pressured Cuban exiles to get together and that the U. S. is supporting, or at least tolerating on U. S. soil, the activities of the exiles looking towards a return to Cuba. It may be argued that all of this is supposition and none of it can be proved; but for the Latin American public--and the U. S. public, too, for that matter--it does not have to be proved. Millions of people still think the United States instigated the Castillo Armas invasion of Guatemala in 1954; but the U. S. hand in that enterprise was far better covered than

On March 28, Schles.  
had sent White Paper  
to Kennedy

it is today with regard to the Cuban exiles. Furthermore, as the Cuban exiles intensify their activities aimed at overthrowing Castro, the more difficult it will become to conceal the U. S. hand.

If Cuban exiles mounted an invasion of Cuba, if they then proclaimed a revolutionary government, if this government appealed to the United States for help, if it were recognized by the United States and given help--all these things would put a coating of legality on the enterprise, but they would do nothing to lessen effectively the universal popular impression that the whole operation was a brainchild and puppet of the United States.

Most Latin American governments are probably sufficiently outraged, or scared, or disillusioned with Castro to be willing to look politely the other way while these things were going on. But the United States problem in Latin America is not with governments; it is with people, particularly with workers, peasants, and students.

The argument is made that Castro must go in order to keep his influence from spreading further among these groups. But Castro's influence has already gone far beyond the personal appeal of Castro as an individual. It has been converted into Castrismo, which can be expected to persist as a doctrine of radical social reform with heavy anti-Yanqui overtones long after Fidel Castro ceases to be the dictator of Cuba. For the United States to overthrow Castro behind a facade of Cuban exiles would merely add fuel to the appeal of Castrismo. Such an action would be denounced from the Rio Grande to Patagonia as an example of imperialism and as the conclusive answer to those who felt that the 1960 election presaged a change in U. S. policy. We would undoubtedly also confront a serious situation in the U. N.

To a large degree, all of this would counterbalance the advantage which would be attained by removing Havana as a source of propaganda, funds, and agitators. Thus, so far as insulating the rest of the Hemisphere is concerned, the United States would not find the overthrow of Castro, in the manner described above, a pure gain. It might even find it a net loss.

There would, of course, be other advantages in the removal of Castro. It would open the way to negotiations for the restoration of confiscated American properties, or for the payment of compensation for them; and it would re-open Cuba for American traders, tourists, and investors. The extent of these advantages can easily be overemphasized, however. It is naive to expect that American business and American landholders ever return

to the status quo ante in Cuba. One cannot completely unscramble the omelet.

Consideration must also be given to the nature and the composition of the government which succeeds Castro. It must be one capable of securing and maintaining genuine popular support -- which is to say it must be left of center. Castro probably has such support now, and any successor would have to do more than give lip-service to the social goals of the Castro revolution.

The leaders of the Democratic Revolutionary Front are a rather uncomfortable coalition, representing what is widely thought to be a shotgun marriage. They include some able men, and they exclude Batista supporters; but they also include some pre-Batista politicians who can scarcely be expected to have more success in governing Cuba now than they had before. The Front, in short, is without the kind of leadership necessary to provide a strong, vigorous liberal government. It includes no Munoz-Marin, no Betancourt, no Lleras Camargo.

If the Front comes to power in Cuba, it -- and through it, the United States -- will inherit a country virtually bankrupt and in an advanced state of social disorder. The task of putting together the pieces will be long, arduous, and expensive, with no guarantee of success. If it were not successful, the United States would be blamed; if it were partially successful, the United States would be blamed for its shortcomings, not only in Cuba but elsewhere.

Although no estimate of the cost of Cuban rehabilitation can now be made, it would be substantial. Consideration should be given to the question of whether the same amount of money could not be put to better, more productive use in other countries of the Hemisphere.

The prospect must also be faced that an invasion of Cuba by exiles would encounter formidable resistance which the exiles, by themselves, might not be able to overcome. The question would then arise of whether the United States would be willing to let the enterprise fail (in the probably futile hope of concealing the U. S. role) or whether the United States would respond with progressive assistance as necessary to insure success. This would include ultimately the use of armed force; and if we came to that, even under the paper cover of legitimacy,

we would have undone the work of 30 years in trying to live down earlier interventions. We would also have assumed the responsibility for public order in Cuba, and in the circumstances this would unquestionably be an endless can of worms.

One further point must be made about even covert support of a Castro overthrow: it is in violation of the spirit, and probably the letter as well, of treaties to which the United States is a party and of U. S. domestic legislation. \*

The Charter of the Organization of American States provides, in articles 15 and 16:

"No State or group of States has the right to intervene, directly or indirectly, for any reason whatever, in the internal or external affairs of any other State. The foregoing principle prohibits not only armed force but also any other form of interference or attempted threat against the personality of the State or against its political, economic and cultural elements.

"No State may use or encourage the use of coercive measures of an economic or political character in order to force the sovereign will of another State and obtain from it advantages of any kind."

Title 18, United States Code, sections 958-962, and Title 50, United States Code, appendix, section 2021, et seq. generally prohibit the enlistment or recruitment for foreign military service in the United States, the preparation of foreign military expeditions in the United States, the outfitting of foreign naval vessels for service against friendly powers, and the furnishing of money for military enterprises against foreign states.

The Convention on the Duties and Rights of States in the Event of Civil Strife, signed at Havana in 1928 and ratified by the United States in 1930, binds the parties --

to use all means at their disposal to prevent the inhabitants of their territory, nationals or aliens, from participating in, gathering elements, or crossing the boundary or sailing from their territory for the purpose of starting or promoting civil strife.

It should be noted that a protocol strengthening this Convention was signed by the United States in 1957 and transmitted to the Senate with a request for advice and consent to ratification in 1959. Among other things, the protocol provided, in Article 5 --

Each Contracting State shall, in areas subject to its jurisdiction and within the powers granted by its Constitution, use all appropriate means to prevent any person, national or alien, from deliberately participating in the preparation, organization, or carrying out of a military enterprise that has as its purpose the starting, promoting or supporting of civil strife in another Contracting State, whether or not the government of the latter has been recognized.

The Senate gave its advice and consent to ratification July 30, 1959. But the U. S. instrument of ratification has never been deposited with the Pan American Union, and the protocol is therefore not in effect so far as the United States is concerned. The clear inference is that the delay has been caused by sensitivity to the fact that the U. S. would be in violation of the Protocol if it completed ratification.

Aside from this protocol, however, the other treaties to which the United States is a party and the domestic statutes which have been cited clearly are intended to prohibit the kind of activity now being carried on by Cuban exiles. To give this activity even covert support is of a piece with the hypocrisy and cynicism for which the United States is constantly denouncing the Soviet Union in the United Nations and elsewhere. This point will not be lost on the rest of the world -- nor on our own consciences for that matter. \*

#### The Toleration Policy

It is argued that, recognizing the disadvantages of intervening in Cuba through an exile front, the disadvantages of not intervening are even greater. In this view, it is held that the longer Castro stays in power the harder it will be to dislodge him and the shakier the situation will become in Central America and the Caribbean.

There are, admittedly, difficulties in this area, and these difficulties are compounded by Castro's activities. But, as indicated above, they might be compounded even more

by ill-concealed U. S. action against Castro. They might be alleviated by other steps designed on the one hand to isolate Castro and on the other hand to insulate the area against his influence.

Castro has already isolated himself to a degree, especially so far as governments are concerned, and this process can be expected to continue. But in general, the insulation process must be carried out before great results can be expected from a policy of isolation. This is to say that the social and political fabric of the area must be strengthened very materially before vigorous action can be expected in the OAS.

This is a slow and difficult process, and the question arises: Can it be done? Can we afford the time? The answer is yes, on both counts, provided that the Soviet Union uses Cuba only as a political and not as a military base ("military" is used here to mean missiles and nuclear weapons, not small conventional arms).

Remembering always this proviso, the Castro regime is a thorn in the flesh; but it is not a dagger in the heart. Its existence represents a great blow to the prestige of the United States. Conversely, it is a great boon to the Soviet Union. It also serves the Soviets as a base for agitation in the rest of Latin America, though removal of this base would by no means exclude the Soviets from the Hemisphere so long as they have their embassies in Mexico, Montevideo, and elsewhere. Nor would it remove the cause of social and political unrest in the area.

Neither, however, is Cuba all net gain for the Soviet Union. It is a long way away. It is expensive in terms of rubles and of Soviet resources.

It was said above that the fall of the Castro regime from internal causes could not reasonably be expected, but this is true only so long as the Soviet Union is willing to pay the price of keeping Castro in power. This price is likely to become progressively higher.

If the Castro regime remains in power, its agitation and propaganda elsewhere in the Hemisphere and particularly in Central America and the Caribbean is certain to continue and is more likely to increase than to diminish. But as was pointed out above, the sources of social and political unrest in these areas pre-dated

Castro and, in the absence of corrective action, will also out-live him.

The real question concerning the future of the Castro regime and its effect on the United States is whether Castro can in fact succeed in providing a better life for the Cuban people; in making Cuba a little paradise, a real Pearl of the Antilles; and whether he can do a better job in this respect in Cuba than the United States and its friends can do elsewhere in Latin America. In all honesty, one should be wary of dogmatic answers on this point. But if one has faith in the human values of the United States, and if that faith is supported by vigorous and intelligent action, then there is no need to fear competition from an unshaven megalomaniac. To look at the other side of the proposition, it would be a fatal confession of lack of faith in ourselves and our values if we decreed that Castro must go because he might succeed.

It will not be easy in any circumstances to shore up the countries of the Caribbean and Central America, and Castro will make it more difficult. But the disadvantages of a policy of overthrow are a good bit clearer than the disadvantages of a policy of toleration, isolation, and insulation. \*

The Act of Bogota and the Alianza para Progreso provide the basis for a solid policy of insulating the rest of the Hemisphere from Castro. But more needs to be done, primarily along political lines. In Mexico, in Costa Rica, and throughout the continent of South America except for Paraguay, there are political leaders with whom the U. S. can work, despite the difficulties which some of them pose. The great lack in the Caribbean and Central America is indigenous political leadership. This is a field which requires our urgent attention. \*

The United States has sadly neglected the political orientation of its economic aid programs. Far too much attention has been given to the economic content and consequences of such programs and far too little to their prospective political results. In so far as they had political content at all, these programs

have usually been keyed to supporting a given government in power, and too often it has been a traditional, oligarchical government on its way out. Too many American Ambassadors have counted themselves successful if they were on a first-name basis with the incumbent President, only to wake up some morning to find the President in exile and a totally unknown group running the country. Virtually nothing has been done to help up-and-coming politicians by way of orientation and training in political techniques. Too little has been done by way of helping underdeveloped countries to develop the kinds of political institutions which, in the United States and Western Europe, act as shock absorbers and ease the peaceful transition of political power.

Tentatively, the question may be raised as to whether this important and hitherto-neglected field provides an opportunity to make use of the talents of the Cuban exiles in a more productive way than invading their homeland.

Would it, for example, be possible to approach some countries in Central America about the possibility of putting Cuban exiles into those countries to help in this respect? Could some of these exiles be used by President Betancourt of Venezuela?

It is to be noted in this connection that Tracy Voorhees, in his last report to President Eisenhower in January, recommended that ways be found to use Cuban exiles in technical assistance in the ICA program in Latin America.

The point to be emphasized here is that the Cuban exiles must be given something constructive to do or they will deteriorate as human beings. Many of them are now receiving military training. How many are receiving any political training to go along with it? Such political training would be necessary even if they invaded Cuba; it ought to be possible to put such training to good use elsewhere in the Hemisphere even if they don't invade Cuba.

For example, there is the International Institute of Political-Social Studies in San Jose, Costa Rica. The Board of Directors of this Institute consists of Romulo Betancourt, President of Venezuela; Victor Raul

Haya de la Torre, leader of the APRA Party of Peru and potentially that country's next President; Jose Figueres, former President of Costa Rica; Eduardo Santos, former President of Colombia and publisher of one of that country's most influential newspapers; and Norman Thomas. Has the possibility been explored of using this Institute to train Cuban exiles in political action work and then scatter them throughout the area?

There have been reports of Castro agents infiltrating, agitating, and training in the mountains of northern Peru. Has thought been given to sending Cuban exiles into the same area?

This paper is written in full knowledge of the difficulties which will attend any large-scale program for the use of Cuban exiles such as is suggested. Latin American governments may well oppose the idea.

Yet, at least so far as Central America is concerned, we must some time break out of the vicious dilemma in which we are now trapped. This is the dilemma of governments in power which perhaps give lip-service to social reform but which do not really have it in their hearts. We must perforce deal with these governments, but if they cannot be converted, they are going to be overthrown. We must make it clear to them that the time for conversion is growing short; that if they are converted to the cause of genuine social reform, we will help them; but that if they are not, we do not propose to be overthrown with them.

One perhaps extreme possibility would be to offer to the governments of Central America some, or all, of the advantages now enjoyed by Puerto Rico in its relationship to the United States. Alternatively a more vigorous policy should be pursued to encourage economic integration and political federation of those countries among themselves.

Finally, it is suggested that emissaries of the Administration consult Governor Luis Munoz-Marin of Puerto Rico before taking irrevocable steps in the Caribbean.

Depending on the outcome of these conversations, it might also be well to consult former President Figueres of Costa Rica, former President Santos of Colombia, President Lleras of Colombia, Prime Minister Beltran of Peru, Mr. Haya de la Torre of Peru, and President Lopez of Mexico. President Betancourt of Venezuela is left off this list because he has such an idee fixe about Trujillo. Lopez might also well be left off, because the Mexicans are so traditionally isolationist in these matters. On the other hand, consulting Lopez would undoubtedly flatter him.

### Conclusion

American property interests in Cuba have been lost, probably most of them irretreivably. But there remain roughly \$8 billion in American investments elsewhere in the Hemisphere, plus an incalculable American political interest. \*

This political interest could be irreparably damaged by ill-considered, ill-concealed action vis-a-vis Cuba. The doctrine of non-intervention badly needs redefinition, but in its present state it is the keystone of all Latin American policies toward the United States. It got that way for historical reasons -- U. S. interventions have generally been on the side of elite groups and the status quo. To most Latinos, "non-intervention" does not mean that you don't intervene on their behalf. The trouble is, that we have rarely, if ever, really intervened on the side of the people of Latin America. Such intervention is implicit in the Act of Bogota and it might as well be faced by all concerned. In the meantime, however, to revert to the Teddy Roosevelt style of intervention in Cuba, however artfully or ineptly, would set us back another two generations. \*

Cuba is no longer important to the United States for its own sake, but only for its effect on our Hemisphere position. Whether we like it or not, we in truth engaged in a kind of competitive co-existence with Castro to see whose system can produce reform and progress more quickly.

We have on our side the best group of Latin American governmets, overall, that we have ever had. On the continent of South America, only Paraguay is not moving with the times. Elsewhere, the picture is reversed. Except for Mexico and Costa Rica, the picture in Central

American and the Caribbean varies from gloomy to desperate. However, it might perhaps be possible to use our still-strong influence on such presidents as Ydigoras in Guatemala, Villeda in Honduras, and even Somoza in Nicaragua to move them a little along the path to salvation.

In the meantime, building in the countries where there is leadership to work with, we can establish areas of strength that can themselves exert a considerable influence -- and do so more effectively than we can.

We cannot realistically expect much help from the OAS in the near future, but this is not to say we can never expect such help. We can afford to be patient enough to await that day.